

To: Colleen Pankratz, Director  
Valley County Transit  
213 9<sup>th</sup> St. South  
Glasgow, MT 59230

From: Cindy Frederickson  
Quality Improvement Specialist

Date: June 30, 2007

Subject: Quality Assurance Review

Please find attached Valley County Transit's Quality Assurance Review FY 2007.  
I wish to express my appreciation to you for assistance provided when Sandra Carpenter, QIS,  
and I were on-site June 27, 2007.

This report contains findings and comments noted during my review of transportation only  
service provided by Valley County Transit obtained from reviewing agency records and  
interviewing Colleen Pankratz, Director.

Cc: David L. Pippin, Chairman  
Dain Christianson, DDP Region 1, Regional Manager  
Tim Plaska, DDP Community Services Bureau Chief  
Perry Jones, DDP Waiver Coordinator  
John Zeeck, DDP Quality Assurance Specialist  
DDP Contract File

## **Valley County Transit Quality Assurance Review – '07**

### **Scope of review**

The purpose of this summary is to evaluate the quality of transportation service only provided to individuals with developmental disabilities by Valley County Transit. Information was obtained through review of documentation on-site.

### **Transportation Service**

Valley County Transit provides transportation service to individuals with developmental disabilities within Glasgow and surrounding communities through contract with the State of Montana Developmental Disabilities Program (DDP) funding from Title XIX and Montana General Fund. Valley County Transit is directed by Colleen Pankratz and is governed by County Commissioners of Valley County, David L Pippin, Chair.

### **Areas Reviewed**

All drivers' licenses were current and correct. All drivers must successfully complete Motor Vehicle Checks, Criminal Background Checks and Drug and Alcohol Testing.

All drivers are required to obtain a passenger endorsement on their State of Montana driver's license. Scheduled and preventative maintenance programs are in place.

- Valley County Transit uses "Car-Trak", a software based program that maintains a database of all agency vehicles, services received, mileage, date of service, etc.
- "Car-Trak" automatically generates preventative and routine maintenance service reports. The reports are utilized to address service repair issues and follow-up in a timely manner.
- Valley County Transit policy and procedure requires pre-trip inspections of each vehicle; in addition to weekly and monthly inspections. All drivers are trained at regularly scheduled staff meetings. Safety committee meetings are monthly

Montana Department of Transportation (MDT) inspections are done as requested by MDT. Colleen Pankratz expects the MDT inspection to occur during next fiscal year.

Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Period Inspection Certification sticker is not required; Valley County is under the Federal Transit Authority.

### **Conclusion**

Valley County transit meets or exceeds all transportation review requirements as defined by the Developmental Disabilities Program Quality Assurance process for Transportation. Valley County Transit has provided excellent services to the individuals served enhancing their participation in the community. I would like to thank Valley County Transit for their cooperation and assistance with this evaluation and look forward to a continuing relationship in serving people with developmental disabilities.

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DATE: May 31, 2007

TO: Rick Thompson, Director  
Hi-Line Homes Programs, Inc.

FROM: Sandra L. Carpenter, Region 1 QIS

RE: Quality Assurance Review, FY '06

Please find attached report for the Quality Assurance Review for Hi-Line Homes Programs, Inc. I wish to express my appreciation to you and your staff for all the assistance provided to me during the course of this review and when I was on-site. It is apparent that you and your staff are highly thought of by comments made from individuals and their families!

This report contains findings, comments and suggestions noted during my review of Supported Living services and Community Supports from checking agency and client records, and client, family and staff interviews. It also includes a review of observations from the above time frame as well as a desk review of incident trends, medication errors, Adult Protective Services issues, client rights issues, transportation and Individual Plan issues, etc. Also reviewed were fiscal reports.

I look forward to continued success with Hi-Line Homes Programs, Inc. Thanks to you and your staff for the ongoing effort to provide quality services to individuals with developmental disabilities.

cc: Sam Waters, President, HLHP Board of Directors  
Dain Christianson, Region 1 Regional Manager  
Tim Plaska, Bureau Chief, DDP  
John Zeeck, Quality Assurance Specialist, DDP  
Perry Jones, Waiver Specialist, DDP  
DDP Contract File

**H-Line Home Programs, INC.  
QUALITY ASSURANCE REVIEW  
FY '06**

**SCOPE OF REVIEW**

The purpose of this summary is to evaluate the quality of services provided to individuals with developmental disabilities by Hi-Line Home Programs, Inc. (HLHP.) The services reviewed are the following: Supported Living, Transportation and Community Supports. Information was garnered through personal observations, interviews and review of documentation on-site as well as a desk review of data collected through the review period including quarterly reports.

**GENERAL AREAS**

**Administrative**

- Hi-Line Home Programs, Inc. is a non-profit corporation governed by a Board of Directors. Daily operations are under the direction of director Rick Thompson. Hi-Line Home Programs, Inc serves four people in supported living and four in Community Supports.
- Financial reports and audit reports were reviewed. HLHP has steadily increased cash reserves from 2001 to 2004. The defensive interval ratio (number of months expenses can be paid with current assets) has as increased to 6.06 in 2005. The savings indicator ratio is considered to be above average. The above factors indicate the funds received may be more than needed for the services provided. A reduction in service charges or an increase in services may be warranted. HLHP continues to qualify as a low risk auditee. No findings or questioned costs were found in the developmental disabilities compliance audit.
- Hi-Line Home Programs, Inc. has fully implemented the new Developmental Disabilities Program Incident Management policy. The Incident Management Committee worked diligently to wade through and disseminate information to all staff.
- While on-site I could not find policy or procedure to ensure individuals and/or families has choice of supported living staff. While it is evident that clients are involved in choosing or not choosing who will work with them, it is suggested that HLHP develop a policy to formally address this.
- HLHP does have an internal grievance process and evidence shows individuals and families are informed on this process as well as many other policies and procedural safeguards. General education concerning services is available.
- HLHP has an orientation process in place and documentation showing staff is trained.
- Hi-Line Home Programs, Inc. has a system of internal communication using a network and a server. This allows necessary information to be posted and accessed by all staff in all of their service areas. HLHP staff lives and work through out the large geographical area of 17 counties in Region 1. HLHP has a website: [www.hilinehomeprograms.org](http://www.hilinehomeprograms.org).
- I did not find evidence that HLHP surveys participants, their families and staff for satisfaction for either service reviewed. Individual satisfaction surveys are found at the case management level only. While there are only a few individuals in HLHP's adult services, a survey could help identify the agency's strengths and areas needing improvement or enhancement.
- HLHP was last accredited by CARF in 2003 and have chosen to not go through accreditation at this time.

## **RESIDENTIAL SERVICES REVIEWED**

### **Supported Living:**

Hi-Line Home Programs, Inc. serves four people in supportive living arrangements: two individuals reside with parents or family, one individual lives in a licensed Adult Foster care setting and one individual is in his own apartment. HLHP was approved as a Qualified Provider of Supported Living for all of the 17 counties in Region 1 in 2006; previously they were listed as a provider in some of the counties, but not all.

### **Health and Safety**

- Medication storage is locked and administration is evident for the Adult Foster Home. The Adult Foster home is licensed by the State of Montana.
- Fire drills are incorporated into the safety checks done monthly. Safety checks include checking smoke alarms and fire extinguishers.
- Assessing the health and safety is addressed in each Individual Plan including bathing protocols for those with seizures.

### **Service Planning & Delivery**

- Hi-Line Home Programs, Inc. works closely with individuals to develop meaningful Individual Plans (IP's). Assessments are used and individual's wishes for services are observed. One assessment found was an assessment typically used with children. It is suggested that staff be encouraged to use assessments geared toward adults.
- Individual plans are maintained as assigned with each Family Support Specialist (FSS). Documentation is evident that objectives were implemented and ran as specified.
- HLHP has not developed a consistent system of internal monitoring as they have typically only had 1 or 2 individuals in this service category. Case managers do not receive quarterly reports on a regular basis and it is suggested that HLHP develop a system to report on progress.
- Individual objectives are creative and support the individuals in their homes as well as in the community. HLHP has increased attention and dedication to finding the right supports and trainers to best fit each individual and the hours of support needed.

### **Staffing**

- Hi-Line Home Programs, Inc. is experiencing the same frustrations felt by many providers across the state: finding and keeping staff to provide direct care services. While there is not a large pool of prospective staff, HLHP has been determined to find staff that are the best for the people in services. They use the usual channels to engage someone in employment but also use word of mouth very effectively and encourage families to recommend a candidate.
- When a staff might not be available, HLHP has provided emergency back up for each person.
- HLHP has an orientation manual and each employee is trained as required. Families assist in training in individual specifics.
- Staff might not be sure what mandatory reporters are in adult services; staff indicated any problems or incidents would be reported to the director first. A suggestion would be to have a quick refresher on abuse/neglect/exploitation from APS.

**Community Supports:**

HLHP provides Community Supports to four individuals. Two have Individual Plans (IP's) and two have Individual Service Plans (ISP's) with their case management. All live with family.

Families and individuals are very satisfied with the services they receive with Community Supports and Hi-Line Home Programs, Inc. One family asked if the FSS that has worked so diligently and conscientiously to obtain the supports for their adult child be given a substantial raise!

**Health & Safety**

- HLHP provides the same level of services as for individuals in supported living. Health and safety needs are considered and documented in IP's. Individual's needs are monitored by family and reported on at least yearly.
- Individuals with ISP's receive respite only. One individual receiving respite only has been identified as having needs greater than what the \$7800 cap in Community Supports can provide. HLHP has worked with the case manager to refer this person for more appropriate services and continue to seek further resources for this individual.
- One individual has learned to drive with support from this service and the IP reflects the individual's independence while providing on-going support in maintaining the driving skills.

**Service Planning & Delivery**

- HLHP maintains the same consistency with this service category as with their supported living service. IP's reflect the individual's wishes and dreams. Objectives are implemented and ran as specified in their plans.
- Again, internal monitoring and quarterly progress reports are not consistent. Please consider developing a system to report progress.
- No other problems or concerns are noted at this time.

**Staffing**

Please see above comments on Supported Living Staffing. The same would apply to this service as well.

**Transportation**

- Hi-Line Home Programs, Inc. was approved to be a Qualified Transportation Provider in all 17 counties in Region 1 in 2006.
- Service is through reimbursement of a staff member using a personal vehicle. HLHP provides transportation service to 1 individual. All staff submits proof of liability insurance, registration and licensure.

**Incident Management**

HLHP has had no incident reports for the folks in either service. There has been no reported Adult Protection Services involvement. No further issue or concerns.

**Conclusion:**

Hi-Line Home Programs, Inc. offers flexibility and creativity with the services provided to adults in Supported Living or Community Supports. Individuals and/or their families appreciate the supports offered.

Areas suggested for enhancement include:

- Consistent internal monitoring,
- Regular submission of quarterly progress reports,
- Staff education on Mandatory Reporting to Adult Protective Services,
- Satisfaction surveys to individual, families and staff,
- Policy addressing choice of staff for individuals and their families,

These are the areas discovered during this review. It has been my observation that on-going improvement in quality is a high priority for this agency. I look forward to your future accomplishments and offer my assistance of support in your endeavors.

cc: Sam Waters, President, HLHP Board of Directors  
Dain Christianson, Region 1 Regional Manager  
Tim Plaska, Bureau Chief, DDP  
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